

MERCATOR:

O R,

Commerce Retrieved,

BEING

CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the *British* Trade, &c.

From Thursday, March 4. to Saturday, March 6. 1713.

No Nation able to undersel our Manufactures if the Goodness is set against the Price.

An Instance in the Manufactures of Scotland, which all sunk when the Trade to England was open.

The Opposers deny Principles, and will not allow that Dearness of Goods lessen their Consumption.

They are ask'd, if as much Brandy will be sold when it pays 52 l. per Ton Custom, as was when it pay'd but 30 s.

The Absurdity of the Notion that we gain a Million a Year by the Trade to Portugal fully Exposed.

The Exports to Portugal for three Years after the Treaty, do not come to a Million; so that it is very unlikely we should gain a Million in One Year.

THE last *MERCATOR* has expos'd sufficiently the Notion, not of the Portuguese only setting up our Manufactures as has been pretended. But indeed of any other Nation doing it to any Purpose, provided our Goods are but admitted to be brought into those Nations upon reasonable Duties.

The *MERCATOR* instanced in the Scots, who before the Union, had effectually Prohibited all our Woollen Manufactures, and that so severely, that whenever they were found they were Burned at the Market-Cross, and several large Parcels of very valuable Goods were accordingly openly Burnt. They likewise set up Fabrications or Manufactories for the making all sorts of English Woollen Goods, and as they got English Wool and English Workmen, they brought the said Manufactures to great Perfection; in short they wanted nothing but Price.

But in spite of living hard, and working cheap, as soon as the Union took Place, the English out-did them, under-fold them, and over-work'd them, and broke all their Manufactories, confirming what the *Mercator* formerly said, (*viz.*) That *set the Goodness of Work against the Price, the English Manufacture is the Cheapest in the World.*

This is evident from what has so often appear'd of the French laying high Duties on our Manufactures upon their Importation into their Country, in order to lessen their Consumption. Indeed our Opposers who have assum'd the Courage of contradicting Establish'd Maxims, and disputing Principles, deny now, that Dearness lessens Consumption; all that they have hitherto done that way serves but to expose them, and were it true, amounts to no more than a particular Exception to a General Rule, which is far from a destroying the General, but serves to confirm it, as shall be seen in its Place.

Mean time they have a very pretty Spot of Work upon their Hands before they can overthrow what the *Mercator* has affirm'd.

They ask in one of their Papers, What is become of the *Mercator's* Maxim, that Cheapness causes Consumption? Because they pretend, that when our Luxu-

ry was growing up to a hight in 1664, 1667. and those Years the Consumption of Wine in England encreas'd notwithstanding additional Duties: But to bring this up to the Case in Hand, they must bring us to believe the following Absurdities.

1. That we shall consume as much French Wine in Britain when it Costs 25 l. per Ton in France, and pays 27 l. Duty in Britain, as we did when it cost 8 or 9 l. per Ton in France, and paid 7 l. 10 s. 4 d. per Ton in England.

That we shall consume as much Brandy in England, notwithstanding the Encrease of our own Distillery too, when it shall pay 52 l. per Ton Duty, as when it paid but 30 s. per Ton.

If this should be true, the *MERCATOR* says, our Luxury must be grown up to some fatal Extreme, and it were time some Laws were made to Restrain it on both sides, which might well bring into Consideration what the *MERCATOR* alledg'd before, of answering more effectually the Clamorous Importunity of the Portugal Merchants, who would fain make their Trade a kind of Monopoly, and gratify them by raising the Duties of Wine in general to such a hight, as should try whether Dearness of Wine would lessen the Consumption or no; by which Means, if the Bill cannot be brought down to the Trade; the Trade may be brought up to the Bill, and the Portugal Merchants may be taught their Folly by their Payment, and may read their Sin in the Punishment: But of these Things the *MERCATOR* may speak more largely in their proper Place.

This however would open their Mouths again about the mighty Trade to Portugal, and the Million a Year Gain, so that we must Encourage our Vices to encrease our Profit: Wherefore this Extravagant Assertion must be Examined about our getting a Million a Year, &c. in which the *MERCATOR* shall do two Things.

1. Prove the Absurdity of that Notion, that such a Gain was ever made by the Trade to Portugal.

2. Prove



2. Prove, that if it was, it was not at all depending upon our taking their Wines, or in danger of being lost by our lessening the Quantity we now Import from thence.

48 Before our Entering into this Argument, it is necessary to explain the Design, to prevent the Misconstruction, Misapplication, and unfair Treatment which the *Mercator* is sure to meet with from the foul Mouths of the Men he has to do with; and this he does, by laying down what he does mean here, and what he does not mean in his Arguing against the Profitableness of the Portugal Trade.

1. That the *MERCATOR* does not intend hereby at all to lessen the Value of the Portugal Trade in our Esteem, much less to do any thing or say any thing which may lessen our real Advantage by it, where it does not interfere with our greater Advantage.

2. The *MERCATOR* does not in the least insinuate; but that the Trade to Portugal is, and ever was a very Gainful, Useful, Necessary Trade to us, as all Traders which vent such a Quantity of our Woollen Manufactures must of Necessity be.

But the *MERCATOR* is confin'd to these Three or Four Things, which he thinks needful to undeceive the People in.

1. That tho' the Trade to Portugal be very great and very Encreasing in its Advantages to Britain; yet that this Advantage is nothing near such a prodigious Sum as we are told it is in Print every Day, (*viz.*) a Million a Year.

2. That whatever Encrease in the Exportation of our Woollen Manufactures to Portugal may have been since the Year 1705. cannot be said to be occasion'd by the Treaty, but has another visible Cause to be assign'd to it.

3. That the Treaty with France is not so Inconsistent with our Trade to Portugal, as that if the Commerce with France should be made Effectual, the Trade with Portugal shall be lost.

4. The *MERCATOR* shall prove, that the Advantage which we shall make by the Admission of our Manufactures into France, will be infinitely greater than any Decrease of our Exportation to Portugal, which can be justly said to be occasion'd thereby can amount to.

To begin with a Million per Annum Gain by the Portugal Treaty. The *MERCATOR* knows no better way to detect this Gasconade than to let the Reader see, That in the Three Year, from 1703. which was the Year of the making of the Treaty with Portugal inclusive, the whole Exportation of Woollen Manufactures from England to Portugal did not amount to the Value of a Million Sterling. If then the Value Exported in Three Years did not amount to a Million, it is plain the Gain could not be a Million in Three Years, much less could it be a Million in One Year?

The Quantity of Woollen Goods Exported to Portugal in Three Years is very great, and a Noble Trade it is, and the *MERCATOR* is glad to see such a Trade from England to any Part; and as he is by no means Undervaluing it by detecting false Accounts of

it, so he thinks it many Ways our Advantage to shew a true Account of it. The Quantities of Woollen Goods Exported, then to Portugal in the said Three Years, are as follow.

NOTE, The Opposers may rate the Value of them by the Prices they have FORMERLY put upon the like Goods, and they will find them, as the *MERCATOR* believes, to come far short of a Million Sterling, and a great Vallue too; tho' Extravagantly less than they pretend to.

From the Custom-House.

An ACCOUNT of Woollen Manufactures Exported from England to Portugal in the Three Years next after the making the Treaty with Portugal, (*viz.*) 1703, 1704, and 1705.

Bays Voc.	{	Barnstable, per Piece	—	44
		Double, per Piece	—	23760
		Minikin, per Piece	—	32637
		Single, per Piece	—	1328
		Broad, per Piece	—	2624
		Long, per Piece	—	7695
		Short, per Piece	—	97903
		Spanish, per Piece	—	7138
		Lists, per Yard	—	2800 Yards
		Rashes, per Piece	—	20
Woollen Cloths Vocat.	{	Remnants, per lb. wt.	—	12114 lb.
		Double Dozens, per Piece	—	2409
		Single, per Piece	—	205
		Kerries, per Piece	—	16124
		Cottons and Plains, per Goad	—	143205 Goads
		Flannel, per Yard	—	7479
		Frize, per Yard	—	83664
		Pennistones, per Piece	—	69
		Perpets and Serges, per lb.	—	1.625826 lb. wt.
		Stuffs, Druggets and Says, per lb.	—	843736 lb. wt.
Stockings Voc.	{	Stuffs mix'd with Silk, per lb.	—	602 lb. wt.
		Waistcoats, per Tale	—	65
		Monmouth Caps, per Dozen	—	3
		Goods ad Valorem	—	1.986: 12s: 6d.
		Childrens Woollen, per doz.	—	11428
		Ditto Woasted, per doz.	—	1955
		Mens Woollen, per doz.	—	58961
		Ditto Woasted, per doz.	—	66230
		Womens Woollen, per doz.	—	5326
		Ditto Woasted, per doz.	—	277

Now let the Modesty of the People be judged by this Scheme. Tho' this be a prodigious Exportation in it self, YET if the Accounts they have given were true of our gaining a Million a Year by our Trade to Portugal; then these Two monstrous things must follow.

1. That we gain 20 per Cent. by all the Manufactures which we send to Portugal: And that, upon the foot of such a Gain, it follows next;

2 That we Exported Fifteen Millions Sterling in Woollen Manufactures to Portugal, in the Three Years above-mentioned; which, the *MERCATOR* affirms, is more than all the Manufactures made in the said Three Years, in the whole Nation.